

6
6 " DIVORCE "
6
666

PROPERTY OF JOHNNIE SPEER.

1951

KED " DIVORCE " GDD
Property of Johnnie Speer

X " DIVORCE "

CAST

LEM THATCHER NEAT CHARACTER
ABNER POTTER G. STRING COMEDY
FELIX LIGHT COMEDY

MAMIE POTTER OLD WOMAN COMEDY
PATSY ?..... SCUBRETTE

SETTING

The living room of Lemuel Thatcher's home.
Neat, and well dressed.

PROPS

Furniture to suit set
Screen
Photographs

" DIVORCE "

THATCHER

(ENTERS AND GOES TO THE DOOR R. AND ADMITS FELIX) Well, hello, Felix, what brings you here so--so early in the evening?

FELIX

I've got reasons, Mr. Thatcher. I've got something very serious to see you about.

THATCHER.

Felix, don't tell me that you are in trouble.

FELIX

No sir; I'm in love with your ward, Patsy.

THATCHER

(SITS DOWN AND SMILES) Well, this is indeed news. Just how seriously are you in love with Patsy?

FELIX

So seriously that I've just got to marry her, that's all there is to it. Now, Mr. Thatcher, I've got a good job; I'm selling radios and I've got a Ford, and--

THATCHER

And I suppose you think that's all it takes to get married on? Felix, marriage is a very serious step.

FELIX

Well, believe me I'm ready to take the step. Patsy is willing too. We really and truly love each other deeply.

THATCHER

You do right now, but will you love her like this fifty years from now

FELIX

Why--why --gee that's a long ways off!

PATSY

(ENTERS L.) Oh hello, Felix, have you asked him yet?

FELIX

You bet! Lets you and me both try our luck at convincing him.

PATSY

(PUTS ARMS AROUND THATCHER) Oh, gee, my old guardian is not going to be an old grouch and say no, and make us elope or do something like that are you? I never thought you'd be that kind of a guardian at all.

THATCHER

(LAUGHS LIGHTLY) No indeed! If you two love each other, I want you both to be happy. But I don't want you to go at this thing in a hasty way. So many modern marriages today are founded upon impulse and infatuation, instead of the good old fashioned real thing--love!

PATSY

Oh, but Felix and I are just carzy about each other, aren't we, Felix?

FELIX

Yes, we're crazy--

I don't doubt that in the least.

PATSY

Now you would say something like that, you old bear. Just what have you got against marriage?

THATCHER

I haven't got anything against marriage, it's divorce that I dislike.

FELIX

That's odd that you should be so bitter against divorce when you make your living by them. You're a divorce lawyer, aren't you?

THATCHER

Yes, you bet I am, my boy, and years of pleading divorce cases has made me despise them. My advice to you two is to be sure that you're in love. Are you willing to ~~wash~~ cook three square meals a day for that setting over there, wash his socks and underwear and see that his shirts are starched.

PATSY

(MOCK CEREMONY) I do!

THATCHER

(TO FELIX) And do you promise to eat her biscuits three times a day even though they be heavier than lead, do you promise to let her put her cold feet up your back in the middle of the winter, and will you get up in the middle of the night and go looking for burglars when she thinks she hears them. To all of this do you solemnly swear.

FELIX

I do! (PATSY AND FELIX BOTH LAUGH)

PATSY

Oh you're a card. Tell me why, guardie, why did you never ~~get~~ get married yourself.

THATCHER

Because the "only girl" said No! In the days when I was young love making was looked upon more seriously. Nowadays you see a young man standing on the street corner on Sunday morning reading the funny paper--a pretty girl comes by, they meet, take hold of arms and go walking. Monday, they are engaged. Tuesday, they get married. Wednesday, they have an addition to the family. Thursday, they have a little argument. Friday they are separated. Saturday they get a divorce and Sunday morning finds the same young man back on the street corner reading the funny paper! Oh it's a fast world. But what I want to know is will you two love each other twenty five thirty forty fifty years from now. Patsy, will you love this fellow when his teeth are false, and he has to walk with a cane, and maybe has a bald head?

PATSY

Sure I would. If he had a bald head, I'd put some polish on it and make a looking glass for myself.

THATCHER

Felix, will you love this girl when she's old and feeble, maybe when her hair is all gray and face wrinkled and ~~shak~~ her cheeks have no rouge on?

Why, sure, I'd love Patsy if she didn't have anything on!

PATSY

Felix!

FELIX

I--I meant if you didn't have any hair on? Patsy. But won't you say the word, Mr. Thatcher?

PATSY

Yes say it.

THATCHER

All right, my children, get married, and may heaven bless you. By the way I want to show you a picture of two old friends of mine. (GETS PICTURE FROM ALBUM) Now see those two? They've been married for almost thirty years. Here's a picture of them when they were young, and here is a picture of them as they are now.

PATSY

(LOOKS AT PICTURE) Mr. and Mrs. Potter. Oh they look like two sweet old dears!

THATCHER

You bet they are! They've never had a cross word for thirty years. That's the kind of a married couple I want you two to be. Divorce is the last thing that they would ever think of. By the way, I recieved a letter from Mr. Potter and he's coming to visit me. When he gets here I'll have him tell you how to get abegg and be happy tho' married.

PA POTTER

(OFF STAGE) All right! All right! Don't bother to show me up. I'll get there.

THATCHER

That's my old friend ~~Kah~~ Abner Potter now.

PA POTTER

(ENTERS R.) Lem! Consarn your soul how are you?

THATCHER

Fine as silk old fellow and how are you? What brings you heree

PA POTTER

You got my letter didn't you? I've come to see you on business.

THATCHER

Yes, I recieved your letter. By the way you have never met my ward, Patsy. This is Mr. Potter, the fellow I've been telling you about.

PATSY

Oh the old fellow is so happily married. We've just been looking at this phntograph of your wife and you. Felix, and I are going to get married, and we want you to tell us how to be happy.

PA POTTER

You want to be happy?

PATSY

Yes?

MAMIE

Oh don't you dare say that about me. Let me at him! Let me at him.
(CHASES PA OFF STAGE ARGUING)

THATCHER

Oh good night! (EXITS IN DESPAIR)

***** NUMBER ONE *****

THATCHER

(ENTERS WITH PA AND MAMIE ARGUING AT EACH OTHER) Now! Now! Let's get calmed down. I'm ashamed and surprised at both of you.

PA POTTER

I tell you I'ma going to have a divorce. I won't live with her. The old catamereen. Now, Lemuel, you're a divorce lawyer, and you're my friend so see that I get a divorce.

MAMIE

Now, Lemuel, you're my friend too, and I want you to see that I get a divorce.

THATCHER

Oh now can't settle this thing without a divorce. I'm sure its just some little family quarell that doesn't amoung to anything. Why for thirty years you two have been married. Are you going to spoil it now. I-- I thought that I was going to live to help you celebrate your golden wedding.

PA POTTER

It can't be done. Me and the old woman just can't get along any more.

THATCHER

Well, what's the matter?

MAMIE

Oh the old billy goat is dead. He aint got no more pep or ambition than a snail. I'm tired of his trifling ways.

THATCHER

What's the matter, Abner, have you lost your ambition?

MAMIE

I don't think he ever had any. Besides, what do you think I caught him doing looking at pictures of naked women. The old varmit!

PA POTTER

Well, ma, I had to look at something interesting once in awhile.

THATCHER

I believe that's what's the matter with you two; you've lost interests in each other.

PA POTTER

Guess so. Me and ma try to get together and do business, but we just can't get no where. Mamie looks at me and I look at her and that's as far as we get!

MAMIE

The old man is just like a worn out fiddle; he's played his last tune!

THAT CHER

MAM IE

THATCHER

PA POTTER

2 TOLAPICHELK d MAM IE

THATCHER

PA POTTER

MAMIE

PA POTTER

MAM TE

PA POTTER

MAMIE

PA POTTER

MA MIE

THAT CHER

MAMIE

THAT CHER

No, I'm trying to be a friend to both of you. I think I see through the whole thing you two have just lost interest in each other. What you bot need is some new life injected into you ~~and and and and~~

MAMIE

I think I need something injected into me.

THATCHER

Now, Abner, has lost interest in you, and if you could make him jealous--you might see how quickly his love with fire up.

MAMIE

You mean I ought to have an affair?

THATCHER

Oh now nothing serious--but it wouldn't hurt for you to make him think someone else cared for you. It might give you a big surprise what he would do.

MAMIE

Well, maybe you're right., I'll think it over, but I'm afraid I'm going to have to have that divorce. Besides divorces are getting so fashionable now. We've had three in our neighborhood in the last six months. (EXIT)

THATCHER

I've got to bring those two together. It isn't right that they should go on like this.

PA POTTER

Is she gone? (ENTERS) I won't stay in the same room I'm telling you.

THATCHER

Abner, what would you do if Mamie fell in love with some other man?

PA POTTER

Has she? Has the old buzzard been chisling on me? If she has I'll use it for grounds for a divorce. That'll get it.

THATCHER

Well, why don't you do something to make her jealous? I wouldn't let her get away with anything one me. I've been talking to her, and I believe that what she needs is some heart interest. Abner, I dare you to try and make her jealous?

PA POTTER

You mean get some woman and --and---

THATCHER

Sure! Try it and see what happens. You haven't got nerve enough to do it.

PA POTTER

I never took a dare in my life. I'll show that old chromo that I aint such a dead one after all. Believe me I'm out to make the old woman green eyed. What my smoke, feller. (EXITS)

THATCHER

(SMILES) Watch his smoke, well when his smoke and her smoke come together there's going to be plenty of fire-works. I only hope it turns out right.

*** NUMBER TWO ***

PATSY

(ENTERS WITH FELIX) Don't you ever speak to me again!

8

FELIX
All right if that's the way you feel about it; I won't. Simply because I ask you to tear up all of your boy friend's pictures after we are married, you have to get huffy.

PATSY
Well, I'm not going to tear them up, Mr. Smarty, so there!

FELIX
All right then I'm going to keep all of my old girl friends pictures.

PATSY
Go ahead, do as you like. I don't have to marry you. You're not the only boy in the world.

FELIX
Yes, and you're not the only girl in the world either.

PATSY
Oh! I'll make you sorry for saying that. Don't you ever speak to me again Felix Smith. (SITS ON SETTE AND CRIES)

FELIX
Aw, honey, let's not quarrell--we said we'd never fight when we got married (STARTS TO PUT ARMS AROUND HER)

PATSY
Leave me alone! I hate you! I never want to see you again!

FELIX
Oh all right. I'll make you sorry. You see if I don't! (EXITS R.)

PATSY
Oh the beast!

PA POTTER
Well, a young girl in distress. What's the matter honey? Aint your boy friend treatin' you right?

PATSY
No, he isn't. He said I wasn't the only girl in the world. (PUTS ARMS AROUND HIM) Oh I'm so miserable!

PA
I feel pretty good myself..Now you can just cry on my shoulders all you want to.

PA ~~PATSY~~ PATSY
Oh you sweet old fellow! I think you're a dear! (MAMIE ENTERS UNNOTICED)

PA
Oh I'm a bear when I get started. Say you know me and my old lady's havin' trouble, and you and your fellers have trouble, what do you say you and me run 'em a race, let's make 'em jealous.

PATSY
What! You mean for me to pretend that you and I are in love with each other?

PA
Sure! Why not? Let's let 'em catch us in a compromising scene, and just see what they do?

PATSY

Your wife's liable to pull all of my hair out.

PA

Yes, and your boy friends liable to kick my brains out, but it's worth trying, besides with such a pretty little girl as you I think I'll have a good time. What do you say, will you let me compromise you?

PATSY

I will if you'll promise not to go too far!

PA

Don't worry I'm harmless!

PATSY

I'm not so sure of that. Come let us take a walk in the garden!

MAMIE

(COMES DOWN) Oh ho, so the old devil is going to try and make me jealous with that young chicken. Well, if he's going to start out to rob the cradle, I'm going to get her boy friend, and I'll show them that two can play at the same game. (LOOKS OFF R.) Here comes that young man now. He's a cute fellow! (FIXES HAIR) I'm not such a bad looker. Maybe I'm not as old as I feel. (FELIX ENTERS) (SHE HAS FLIRT BUS.) (GIGGLES) Tee hee!

FELIX

(ASIDE) I wonder what's the matter with this old fool?

MAMIE

Young man, won't you come over and sit down by me? (SITS ON SETTEE) (HE SETS DOWN) What's the matter with you? You look so worried.

FELIX

Oh I'm sore! Patsy told me that I wasn't the only boy in her life!

MAMIE

Poor boy! You've quarrelled. Well, why don't you make the young girl jealous? Why don't you get some beautiful woman--ahem! and make love to them?

FELIX

Where would I find a beautiful woman to make love to around here.

MAMIE

(GIGGLES) Oh young man, I'm here!

FELIX

Oh, go home! Go home! You don't mean to tell me that you'd let me make love to you, do you?

MAMIE

Well, now you just try it and see if I stop it you.

FELIX

(PUTS ARMS AROUND HER) Why you're old enough to be forgetting about such things.

MAMIE

No I'm not. You see I want to make my old man jealous.

FELIX

I wonder what Patsy would do if she thought I
was

Making love to you. Maybe she wouldn't be so smart. By George 10
I'm going to do it just to show her. (PUTS ARMS AROUND MAMIE) We'll
lead those two a merry chase won't we?

MAMIE

Oh you bet we will. We'll let them catch us in a compromising position.
Young man, you've got to compromise me.

FELIX

Well, old girl, you're sure going to get it. (MOVES HER UP)

MAMIE

(GIDDY BUS.) Oh I can't stand much of this. You've made goose pimples
all over me!

FELIX

Say I haven't got started yet. Oh you, baby!

MAMIE

Now look out, don't you go far, young man! I'm liable to weaken. Oh,
I feel so kittenish. (SLAP BUS.) Tag you're it! (RUNS TO CORNER OF THE
ROOM. GIGGLES)

FELIX

(LAUGHS) Oh you old hen!

MAMIE

Don't you call me an old hen, I'm a chicken.

FELIX

Well, then chase me, chicken I'm full of corn! (RUNS OFF L.)

MAMIE

Oh I never felt so giddy in all my life. I feel like a young girl again
I'll show that old devil I'm married to that if he travels my gait, he's
sure got to be going some! Wait for me young man. (EXITS L.)

*** NUMBER THREE ***

MAMIE

Now come along young man, you 've just got to make love to me.

FELIX

Nothing doing! I can't do it. I zäint got the heart.

MAMIE

Oh yes, you have. You help me make my husband jealous and I'll give
you a hundred dollars..

FELIX

A hundred dollars? Gee whiz, that will help to the furniture when Patsy
and I get married. All right, I'll do it. What do you want me to do
first?

MAMIE

Well, I thought we'd wait until my old man came in this room, then you
and I would get behind that screen there, and I sit on your lap, and you'
put your arm around me, and then when he caught us, why we would see
what he would do. Now come on over here and sit down. (SHE SEATS HIM
BEHIND SCREEN) ~~He looks at her~~ Now I'm going to sit on your lap.

FELIX

If you do I'm liable to do you a dirty trick.

Young man, now you be careful. (SITS ON HIS LAP*)

FELIX

(SQUEEZES HER) Oh I'm going to see that you get your hundred dollars worth.

MAMIE

Shh! I think I hear the old devil coming now. (PULLS SCREEN AROUND THEM) Now to attract his attention!

PA POTTER

(ENTERS WITH PATSY BY THE HAND) Now come on ~~ye~~'re going to go through with it.

PATSY

Oh no, I don't think I better now.

PA POTTER

You make my wife jealous for me and I'll give you a hundred dollars!

PATSY

A hundred dollars! All right then it's a go. (THROWS ARMS AROUND HIM) Now what do you want?

PA POTTER

Oh I just wish I was ten years younger! (HUGS HER) Wait till the old woman sees this!

MAMIE

(STICKS HEAD FROM BEHIND SCREEN) Ahem!

PA POTTER

(LOOKS AROUND) Who's a ham?

PATSY

Oh, I'm beginning to get afraid!

PA POTTER

Don't worry, baby, I'll protect you! (BUS.) I want lovin' and plenty of it! Come on let's have a soul kiss. (STARTS TO BEND HER BACK)

THATCHER

(ENTERS R.) Say what in the world is going on here. Abner, you old fool what are you doing?

PA POTTER

(ARMS AROUND PATSY) I'm just getting the thrill of a life time!

MAMIE

Ahem!

THATCHER

What's this over here? (GOES TO SCREEN AND PULLS IT AWAY REVEALING MAMIE AND FELIX) (MAMIE IS SETTING ON FELIX LAP AND HOLDING HIM DOWN)

PA POTTER

(STARES ASTONISHED) Well, I'll be damned!

PATSY

Felix! What are you doing holding that old woman on your lap?

12

FELIX
(BOILING) And what are you doing ~~hugging~~ letting that old hedge hog have his arm around you?

PATSY
It's no worse than you letting that old hatchet face sit on your lap.
(PUTS ARMS AROUND PA) Besides I think this old fellows kind of cute.

FELIX
Let me up from here! (DROPS MAMIE ON THE FLOOR) You old red nosed beetle I'll show you if you can get away with that stuff on my girl. (STARTS AFTER PA)

PA
Look out now, son. (FELIX CHASES HIM OFF)

PATSY
Oh, Felix, wait don't hit that poor old man. (SHE RUNS AFTER HIM)

THATCHER
Well, of all the messed up affairs. What in the world have you two done The idea of causing trouble between those two young lovers.

MAMIE
Well, you told me to make the old man jealous, and he was hugging that young hussy! And it didn't do any good. He wasn't the least bit jealous when he saw me.

THATCHER
Of course not! When I told you two make each other jealous I meant for you to get some near your own age.

MAMIE
Oh well, there's no use, we've just got to have a divorce, that's all there is to it!

THATCHER
Well, you're not going to have a divorce!

MAMIE
What do you care whether we have one or not?

THATCHER
I do care. I want to see you two happy. You're both just like children to me. And you ought to be ashamed. Thirty years of married life and then you think of a divorce. Mamie, you love Abner, and you know it.

MAMIE
Oh I don't know!

THATCHER
Yes you do. You chose him in preference to me thirty years ago. (SHE GIVES HIM A SURPRISED LOOK) Hadn't you forgotten that I loved you--and don't you know that I still do. (ASIDE) I'll bring these two fools together now. (TO MAMIE) Mamie, if Abner, doesn't want you then? I'll take you. My love for you is a like a burning volcano. (GRABS HER HAND)

MAMIE
(TRIES TO PULL AWAY) Have you gone crazy?

THATCHER
I'm crazy with love for you. How I have longed to take you in my arms and caress you. Come! Fly away to Tasmania with me.

12

FELIX
(BOILING) And what are you doing ~~hugging~~ letting that old hedge hog have his arm around you?

PATSY
It's no worse than you letting that old hatchet face sit on your lap.
(PUTS ARMS AROUND PA) Besides I think this old fellows kind of cute.

FELIX
Let me up from here! (DROPS MAMIE ON THE FLOOR) You old red nosed beetle I'll show you if you can get away with that stuff on my girl. (STARTS AFTER PA)

PA
Look out now, son. (FELIX CHASES HIM OFF)

PATSY
Oh, Felix, wait don't hit that poor old man. (SHE RUNS AFTER HIM)

THATCHER
Well, of all the messed up affairs. What in the world have you two done The idea of causing trouble between those two young lovers.

MAMIE
Well, you told me to make the old man jealous, and he was hugging that young hussy! And it didn't do any good. He wasn't the least bit jealous when he saw me.

THATCHER
Of course not! When I told you two make each other jealous I meant for you to get some near your own age.

MAMIE
Oh well, there's no use, we've just got to have a divorce, that's all there is to it!

THATCHER
Well, you're not going to have a divorce!

MAMIE
What do you care whether we have one or not?

THATCHER
I do care. I want to see you two happy. You're both just like children to me. And you ought to be ashamed. Thirty years of married life and then you think of a divorce. Mamie, you love Abner, and you know it.

MAMIE
Oh I don't know!

THATCHER
Yes you do. You chose him in preference to me thirty years ago. (SHE GIVES HIM A SURPRISED LOOK) Hadn't you forgotten that I loved you--and don't you know that I still do. (ASIDE) I'll bring these two fools together now. (TO MAMIE) Mamie, if Abner, doesn't want you then? I'll take you. My love for you is a like a burning volcano. (GRABS HER HAND)

MAMIE
(TRIES TO PULL AWAY) Have you gone crazy?

THATCHER
I'm crazy with love for you. How I have longed to take you in my arms and caress you. Come! Fly away to Tasmania with me.

Get away now! (ASIDE TO AUD.) This old fool is getting serious!

THATCHER

Ah, my beautiful Mamie, I could devour you with my passion. (TAKES A HOLD OF HER ARM GRABS IT AND TAKES A BITE OF IT) (SHE SCREAMS)

MAMIE

Oh help! He's getting vicious. I'm going to tell my husband. Leave me alone now. (SHE EXITS. HE FOLLOWS AFTER HER)

PA POTTER

(ENTERS L. ON THE RUN) Look out now, boy. It was all a joke.

FELIX

(AFTER HIM FOLLOWED BY PATSY) A joke! I'll make you think it was a joke.

PATSY

Oh Felix, you wouldn't hit an old man like that!

PA POTTER

No, you wouldn't hit a poor old man like me, would you? (TREMBLES)

FELIX

(MAKES PASS AT PA) Oh shut up, you old reprobate. (TO PATSY) What do you mean by letting him hug you.

PATSY

Well, what do you mean by letting that old woman sit on your lap?

PA POTTER

Yes, that's what I'd like to know. Just what were you doing to my old lady behind that screen, son?

FELIX

(LAUGHS) Oh you 'd be surprised! What were you doing with Patsy?

PA POTTER

Oh you'd be surprised! (GRINS AT HIM)

FELIX

You--(MAKES PASS AT HIM. PA DODGES)

PATSY

Don't you hit him. It isn't his fault. We only done it to make you jealous, and beside he's going to give me a hundred dollars.

FELIX

Oh is that so? Well, his old lady is going to give me a hundred dollars too! Patsy, I think it's all a mistake. Let's forgive and forget. Will you?

PATSY

All right! But never let it happen again.

MAMIE

(ENTERS L. HER HAIR DISARRANGED AND HER DRESS TORN) Help! Help! Oh save me? He's after me. (RUNS IN AND AROUND STAGE FOLLOWED BY THATCHER)

THATCHER

Ah come to my arms my beautiful love bird!

PA
Hey! What's coming off here!

MAMIE
Oh, Pa, he's trying to take it away from me.

PA
Take what.

MAMIE
My love! Get away now. (SHE EXITS. THATCHER RIGHT AFTER HER)

PA
Why that dirty son of a guh, trying to make love to my old woman. (EX(T
I'll stop that.

FELIX
It looks like there's going to be a murder.

MAMIE
(ENTERS PUFFING) Oh I'm all out of wind! (THATCHER ENTERS AFTER HER)
Get away! (SHE JUMPS UP ON SETTEE AND KICKS AT HIM. HE WALKS AROUND
BUS. OF ACTING PASSIONATE³)

PA POTTER
(ENTERS) Sayk just what's the meaning of this? What are you trying to
my old lady?

MAMIE
Oh Pa, he's chased me till I'm about to give up to him.

PA POTTER
Don't you do it, ma.

THATCHER
Well, what do you care? You're going to get a divorce from her, and I
used to love her and now she's going to be mine! (STARTS FOR HER)

PA POTTER
(STEPS BETWEEN THEM) The devil she is!

THATCHER
What! You mean that you still love her?

PA POTTER
Sure I do, and I aint going to give her up to a false friend like you.
The idea! The minute my back is turned you make love to my wife!

THATCHER
Well, that's what I'll do if you two get a divorce.

PA POTTER
Well, then there aint going to be no divorce.

MAMIE
Oh, Abner!

PA POTTER
Mamie! (THEY EMBRACE)

THATCHER
Good! Now that's what I've wanted to see you two do.

PA
What? Then you don't want my old lady,

THAT CHER
It wouldn't do any good if I did, would it?

PA
Not a damn bit! Honey, for a minute I thought I'd lost you.

MAMIE
Honey, you don't know how close you came to it. But everything is all right now.

THAT CHER
(TO PATSY AND FELIX) And is everything all right with you two?

PATSY
(IN EACH OTHERS EMBRACE) Uh huh!

THAT CHER
Well, bless you then my children,. Now it's getting late so I guess we better all turn in the hay. I thank heaven that there will no divorce for at least one couple. I guess you two have found interest each other again,

MAMIE
Yes, we're starting over anew! Come on, Pa, let's get to -to bed.

PA
All right honey? (THEY START TOWARDS D. L. TOGETHER HAND IN HAND)

THAT CHER
Hey! Abner, how's your ambition?

PA
(WINKS) Raising right up?

F I N A L E